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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Prepared for the Season Ahead

November naturally brings a shift in perspective. As the temperatures drop and the holidays approach, we begin preparing for winter while also taking time to reflect on the people, partnerships and blessings that make our communities special.

In this month's issue, we continue our **BEHIND THE COST OF POWER** series in partnership with our generation and transmission provider, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation (Sunflower). **PART 3** takes you behind the scenes of electric generation and the thoughtful decisions that go into maintaining existing resources, planning for future demand and managing costs responsibly. As electricity demand continues to grow, Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) and Sunflower remain focused on investments that provide dependable service and long-term value for our members.

We're also helping members prepare for **WINTER STORM SEASON** with an important reminder about who owns what when it comes to the electrical equipment serving your home or business. Generally, WEC maintains the equipment and lines up to the meter, while members are responsible for equipment beyond the meter. Knowing those responsibilities before severe weather strikes can help make repairs and power restoration safer and more efficient. If you ever have questions about your service or aren't sure who is responsible for a repair, email memberservices@weci.net. We're here to help!



Bruce W. Mueller

Finally, November is a season of gratitude, and I have much to be thankful for. I am especially grateful for the employees of WEC. Day in and day out, this team works incredibly hard to serve our members — often in challenging conditions and at all hours. I'm equally thankful for you, our members. Your families, farms, businesses and communities remind us why our work matters.

At WEC, providing electricity is only part of what we do. Whether we're preparing for the next storm, planning for our future energy needs or simply answering a member's question, we remain committed to our mission of ***DELIVERING ENERGY FOR LIFE***.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE.

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Many workplace injuries occur during tasks we've performed hundreds of times before. Familiarity can create a false sense of security, causing us to overlook hazards that would otherwise get our attention. As we move into colder weather and shorter days, take a moment before each job to slow down, assess the situation, and make sure nothing has changed. A brief pause to think through the work can prevent a serious incident. Stay alert, stay engaged and never let routine replace awareness.

BEHIND THE COST OF POWER | PART 3

Managing Generation Resources for a Stronger Energy Future

BY STEVE EPPERSON, CEO, SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION
CO-AUTHORED BY BRUCE W. MUELLER, CEO/GENERAL MANAGER, WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

In the first two articles in our **BEHIND THE COST OF POWER** series, we explored the cooperative partnership between Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) and our wholesale power supplier, **SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION** (Sunflower), and the work required to maintain and expand the transmission system. In **PART 3**, we're taking a closer look at electric generation and its role in the cost of wholesale electricity. Making the most of proven generation resources today can help avoid unnecessary replacement costs while continuing to provide Wheatland members with dependable power as electricity needs grow.

MAKING THE MOST OF EXISTING RESOURCES

One of the best ways to manage generation costs is to make the most of our current generation facilities, many of which have served electric consumers in central and western Kansas for decades. The average age of Sunflower's coal and natural gas generation fleet is 49 years, with some units approaching 60 years old. As equipment ages, maintenance becomes increasingly important and, in some cases, more complex. But that doesn't automatically mean an older generation unit is a candidate for replacement. Continuing to maintain an existing unit can be far less expensive than building an entirely new generating resource. That's why Sunflower uses technology, inspections, and detailed maintenance planning to identify problems early, improve performance, and extend the useful life of our generating assets.

For example, Sunflower updated the analog control systems at several older natural gas generation facilities to modern digital systems. Online performance monitoring helps identify early signs of equipment problems or efficiency losses, while a computerized maintenance management system helps staff track repairs, plan preventive maintenance, and identify future replacements.

At Sunflower's **HOLCOMB STATION** coal-fired generation plant, a 2006 furnace modification significantly reduced slag buildup on boiler tubes and helped extend the life of the boiler. More recently, sections of the boiler were replaced during planned outages to better align equipment life with the plant's operating life.

Maintenance planning also means looking for ways to spread costs over time. A great example is Holcomb Station's fabric filter baghouse used for control of particulate emissions, which has 28 compartments containing hundreds of filter bags requiring periodic replacement. Sunflower staggers the filter bag replacement rather than replacing them all at once, helping levelize costs while keeping the equipment operating as intended.

These decisions may seem like small details, but they add up. Maintaining equipment, identifying problems early, and making strategic upgrades can help extend asset life and delay the need for more costly replacements. When replacement makes sense, Sunflower carefully evaluates the costs, reliability, and needs of our local communities to determine the best path forward. The goal is not simply to add new infrastructure, but to make investments that provide dependable service and long-term value for Wheatland members.

Our responsibility is to plan carefully, prioritize wisely, and invest in the resources that provide the greatest long-term value to Wheatland members like you.

PLANNING FOR A CHANGING ELECTRIC GRID

While we're making the most of today's generation resources, we're also adapting to rising electricity demand in Kansas and across the country. The **NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY CORPORATION** (NERC), which develops and enforces electric reliability standards for the bulk power system, projects peak demand on the U.S. energy grid to increase by 24% by 2035.

Regionally, **SOUTHWEST POWER POOL** (SPP), which operates the power market serving Kansas and 16 surrounding states, has a current system peak of 56 gigawatts. A system peak is the highest amount of electricity being used across the SPP region at one time. Under SPP's higher-growth



scenario, the regional peak demand could double within 10 years. This potential growth reinforces why long-term planning matters. New generation resources can take years to plan, permit, finance, engineer, and construct.

As not-for-profit cooperatives, Sunflower and WEC have a responsibility to make thoughtful decisions on behalf of consumers. That means balancing today's needs with tomorrow's, focusing on the costs we can control and carefully weighing the long-term value of every investment.

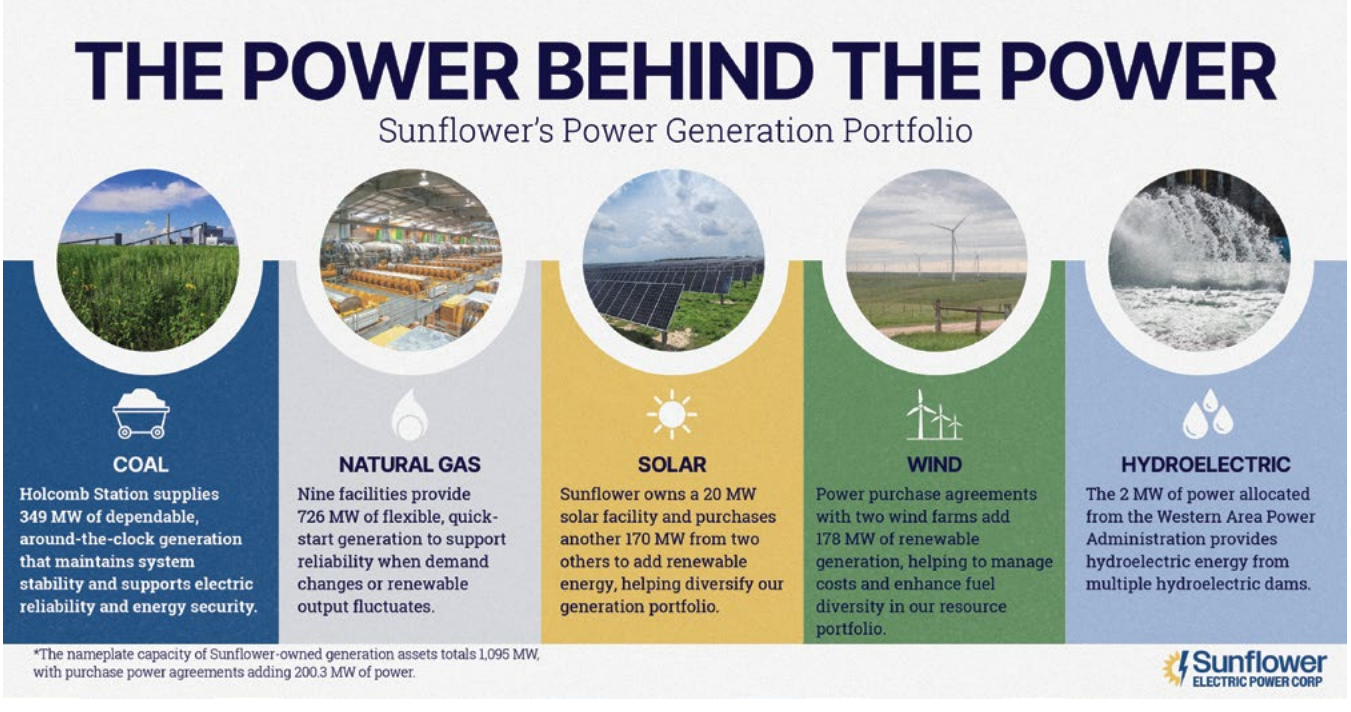
INVESTING WITH THE LONG TERM IN MIND

The electric system we rely on today was built through decades of investment. Maintaining that system and preparing it for tomorrow requires the same long-term thinking. We also recognize rising costs concern families and businesses, and WEC and Sunflower take that responsibility seriously. Some investments are necessary to keep the system reliable and ready for future needs, but every investment should have a clear purpose. Our responsibility is to plan carefully, prioritize wisely, and invest in the resources that provide the greatest long-term value to WEC members like you.

As this series continues, we'll explore more of the forces shaping wholesale power costs, including regional energy markets, changing electricity demand, supply chain pressures, and the ways WEC and Sunflower are working together to maintain a reliable power supply while managing costs responsibly.

SCAN TO READ BEHIND THE COST OF POWER

PART 1 PART 2





Understanding Electric Equipment Responsibilities

Severe weather can strike quickly and hit hard, sometimes causing significant damage to essential **ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT** throughout our communities. When storms bring high winds, lightning, heavy rain or other hazardous conditions, the resulting damage can lead to power outages and require repairs by both our cooperative and members like you.

Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) is always prepared to respond swiftly to outages and restore power safely, but it is also important for **HOMEOWNERS** and **BUSINESS OWNERS** to understand which parts of the electric system are their responsibility and which are maintained by the co-op. Understanding these key differences can help speed up repairs and ensure everyone stays safe when the weather turns rough.

As a general rule, WEC is responsible for maintaining and repairing equipment and lines running up to your **METER.** This includes utility poles, distribution power lines, padmount transformers and the meter itself.

Members, on the other hand, are responsible for electrical equipment **BEYOND THE METER,** including equipment such as the weatherhead or service mast located outside the home. Because meter locations and service configurations can vary, the service line running from the meter to a home or business may also be the member's responsibility.

If any member-owned equipment is damaged, please call a licensed electrician to conduct the repairs. A licensed professional has the experience and know-how to assess and manage these types of repairs. We can even put you in touch with one of our trusted local electrician partners — just call your local WEC office to get started.

When severe weather damages electrical equipment, repairs to member-owned equipment must be completed before WEC crews can safely restore power to your home or business. Understanding which equipment you are responsible for can help make the repair and restoration process smoother and faster. And, as always, if you encounter a **DOWNED OR DAMAGED POWER LINE** — whether during or after a storm or at any other time — stay at least **40 FEET AWAY** and report it immediately to WEC or emergency services.

Lastly, trees and landscaping add beauty to our communities, but regular trimming is essential to maintaining reliable electric service and minimizing damage from severe weather. That's why, throughout the year, WEC hires a third-party service provider — Solida Tree Service, based in Phillipsburg — to trim trees throughout our southwest and central Kansas service territory to improve service reliability.

WEC is responsible for **TRIMMING VEGETATION** around primary distribution lines and, in some circumstances, secondary lines maintained by the cooperative. If overgrown limbs or vegetation are affecting member-owned electrical equipment or service lines beyond the meter, trimming is generally the member's responsibility. If you're unsure who is responsible, contact your local WEC office before arranging tree work. In addition, if you're planning to trim trees near electrical lines, please contact us first to prevent accidental contact with energized lines and reduce the risk of branches falling onto or damaging electrical equipment.

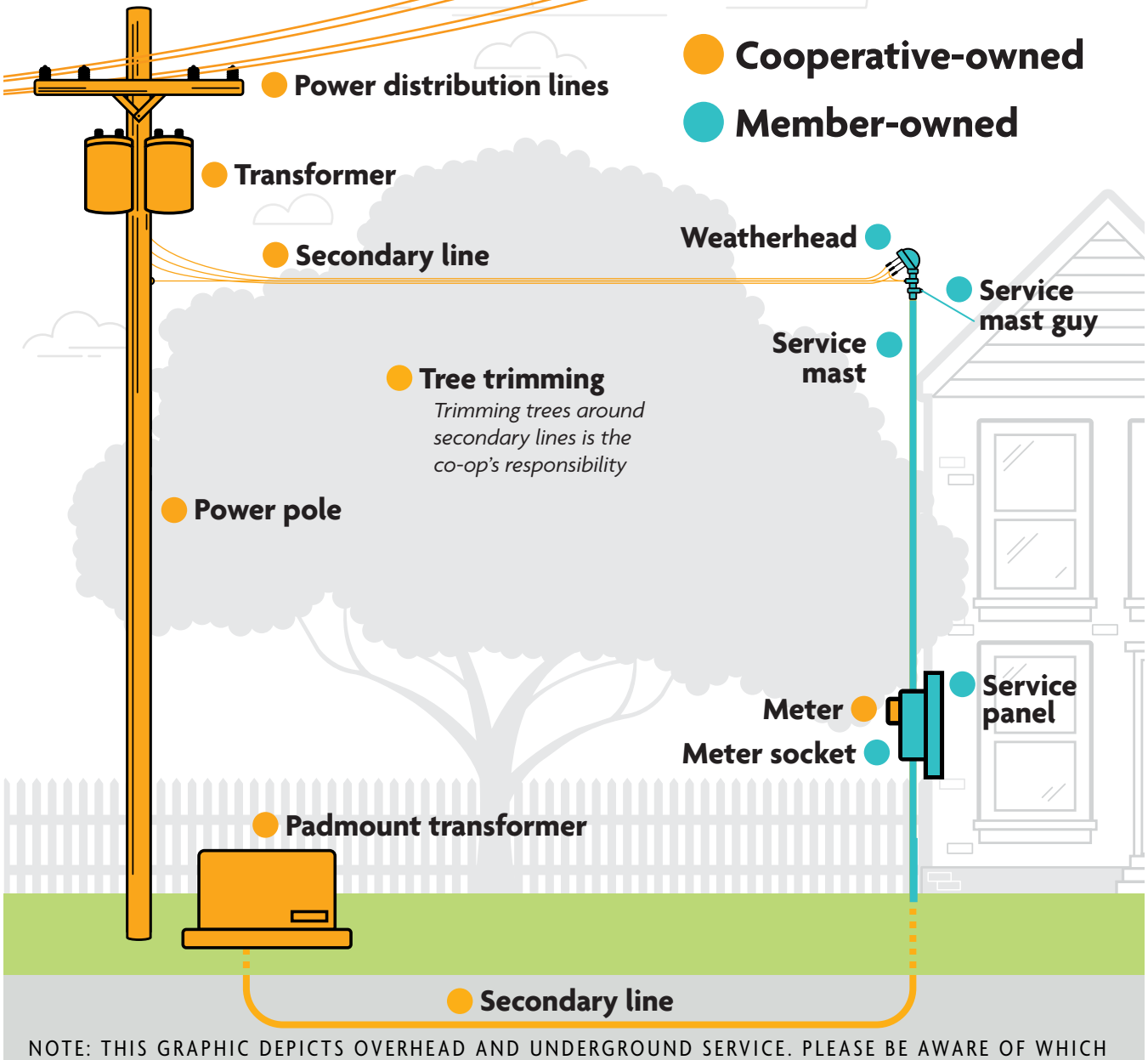
By understanding who is responsible for the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared when severe weather impacts our communities. If you have any questions about your electrical equipment or aren't sure who's responsible, we're here to help. Please contact your local WEC office or drop us a message at memberservices@weci.net today!

By understanding who is responsible for the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared when severe weather impacts our communities.

Who Owns What?

Electric Cooperative-Owned Equipment vs. Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the **CO-OP (IN YELLOW)** and the **MEMBER (IN BLUE).** If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



NOTE: THIS GRAPHIC DEPICTS OVERHEAD AND UNDERGROUND SERVICE. PLEASE BE AWARE OF WHICH TYPE OF SERVICE YOU RECEIVE AT YOUR HOME.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Be a Co-op Voter

Election Day is almost here. On **NOV. 3,** Kansans will head to the polls for the **2026 GENERAL ELECTION** — and as a member of Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., your voice matters.

VOTING is one of the most powerful ways we can help shape the future of the communities we call home. It's also an opportunity to consider the issues that matter to electric cooperative members and rural Kansas.

That's the idea behind **CO-OPS VOTE,** a nonpartisan initiative of America's electric cooperatives designed to encourage civic engagement and help co-op members make informed decisions at the polls. The program encourages voters to learn about issues affecting their cooperative and community, get to know the candidates and policymakers, and understand where they stand on issues affecting affordable, reliable electricity.

Why does the co-op voice matter? Electric cooperatives serve **42 MILLION PEOPLE IN 48 STATES** and power more than **22 MILLION HOMES, BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS AND FARMS.** Decisions made by elected officials can affect everything from energy policy and infrastructure to reliability, affordability, and the future of rural communities.

As **ELECTION DAY** quickly approaches, take a few minutes to prepare. Confirm your voter registration and polling location, review your sample ballot, research the candidates and issues, and make a plan to vote. Kansas voters can find official election information, including polling locations and sample ballots, at **VOTEKANSAS.GOV** today.

And as you consider your choices, remember your perspective as a cooperative member. Ask questions. Learn where candidates stand on issues important to rural communities and electric cooperatives. Then make the choices that best reflect your own priorities.

THE CO-OP VOICE IS POWERFUL — AND IT STARTS WITH YOU. Learn more about becoming a Co-op Voter at **WWW.VOTE.COOP** to get started!

SCAN TO VISIT WWW.VOTE.COOP

Rural communities depend on Co-op Voters.

Learn about the issues.
Find your polling place.
Talk to your family and friends.
GO TO THE POLLS ON NOV. 3.



Be an active participant in our democracy. Be a Co-op Voter.

www.vote.coop





COLD WEATHER ACCOMMODATION

BEGINS NOV. 15

In order for a member to retain electric service when temperatures are above 35 F during the cold weather period, they must comply with the following provisions:

- Inform us of their inability to pay their account in full.
- Complete and sign a Cold Weather Accommodation agreement.
- Pay any outstanding billed deposit in full.
- Pay half of each current bill during the cold weather period.
- Past due balances (including the bill due Nov. 5) must be paid in full at the inception of the cold weather period.
- Apply for federal, state or local funds for which the member may be eligible.
- Agree to make an arrearage payment plan or sign up for our Prepay Power program at the conclusion of the cold weather period.



Wheatland Electric has adopted the following cold weather accommodation policy for residential members. All delinquent accounts are subject to disconnection when temperatures exceed 35 F for a 48-hour period between Nov. 15 and March 15, unless a member requests a cold weather accommodation.

Members who do not adhere to their accommodation agreement are not eligible for payment arrangements at the conclusion of the cold weather period. The entire outstanding balance, applicable fees and additional deposit, if applicable, are due and payable prior to reconnection if service is disconnected. Questions? Contact your local WEC office today.





ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Lower your water heater temperature to save energy. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends 120 F for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use and help prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

